



CONCEPT NOTE

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WiM-Africa NextGen Mining & Leadership Academy (Secondary Schools Program)

Secondary Schools – Ages 13–20

02 April 2026



Background and Rationale

Across Africa, mineral-rich countries possess significant deposits of gold, diamonds, and other critical resources. However, participation in the mining sector remains largely unequal, with women and youth underrepresented in formal decision-making roles, technical professions, and value addition segments of the industry.

Many young people grow up in mining environments or mineral-endowed regions, yet there is limited structured exposure to the sector in terms of leadership development, geoscience awareness, environmental responsibility, or clear career pathways. As a result, youth engagement often remains informal, unstructured, or disconnected from long-term economic opportunities.

At the secondary school level (ages 13–20), students are at a critical stage of identity formation, career orientation, and civic awareness. Despite this, there is a gap in structured programming that introduces them to:

- Responsible mining practices
- Environmental stewardship and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) principles
- Gender inclusion in the extractive sector
- Cooperative and enterprise development models
- Leadership, communication, and critical thinking skills

To address this gap, Women in Mining Africa (WiM-Africa) proposes the establishment of the **WiM-Africa NextGen Mining & Leadership Academy**, a structured, school-based program designed to prepare young women and men for ethical, skilled, and leadership-oriented participation in Africa's mineral sector.

2. Program Goal

To build a continental pipeline of informed, confident, and leadership-ready youth—particularly young women—who can actively participate in and transform Africa's mineral value chains.

3. Objectives

The Academy aims to:

1. Introduce secondary school students to responsible mining, geoscience fundamentals, and mineral value chains
2. Develop leadership, public speaking, and civic engagement skills among youth
3. Promote gender equity and challenge barriers to participation in the extractive sector
4. Create awareness of ESG standards, environmental responsibility, and mine safety principles
5. Establish mentorship and career pathways linked to mining institutions, cooperatives, and the WiM-Africa Institute

4. Target Group

- Students aged 13–20
- Secondary schools (public and private)
- Technical and vocational institutions
- Both girls and boys, with targeted encouragement for female participation

5. Program Structure



The Academy will operate as an **extracurricular school-based program**, implemented through structured sessions coordinated by designated teacher mentors and WiM-Africa facilitators.

Core Pillars

1. Leadership & Communication

- Public speaking workshops
- Debate sessions on responsible mining
- Confidence-building and teamwork exercises

2. Introduction to Mining & Geoscience

- Basic understanding of mineral formation
- Overview of mineral value chains
- Career pathways in geology, engineering, ESG, and policy

3. ESG, Safety & Environmental Responsibility

- Mine safety awareness
- Environmental protection and climate resilience
- Ethical and responsible resource management

4. Gender & Social Inclusion

- Addressing gender-based barriers
- Promoting inclusive participation
- Encouraging female leadership in extractives

5. Career Exposure & Mentorship

- Guest lectures from industry professionals
- Exposure to real-world sector opportunities
- Linkages to training programs under the WiM-Africa Institute

6. Expected Outcomes

Short-Term Outcomes

- Increased awareness of responsible mining practices among students
- Improved leadership confidence and communication skills
- Greater interest in STEM and mining-related careers, especially among girls

Medium-Term Outcomes

- Development of a youth database for mentorship and career tracking
- Increased female participation in mining-related tertiary education
- Youth-led advocacy for safe, inclusive, and ethical mining practices

Long-Term Impact

- Establishment of a structured youth pipeline into Africa's mineral sector
- Emergence of young leaders influencing gender-responsive extractive policies
- Strengthened community-level understanding of sustainable resource management

7. Implementation Approach

The program will be implemented through:

- Formal engagement with school leadership and education authorities
- Appointment of **1–2 Teacher Coordinators per school**



- Monthly structured sessions (1–2 hours)
- Periodic inter-school engagement forums
- Annual **NextGen Youth Leadership Summit** at national or regional level

8. Alignment with WiM-Africa Framework

The Academy aligns directly with:

Strategic Focus Areas

- **SF1: Coalition Building** (schools, educators, youth networks)
- **SF3: Economic Empowerment & Sustainable Development** (career pathways and enterprise awareness)

Seven Point Program Agenda (7PPAs)

- **Agenda 5: NextGen WiM – Investing in Future Women Mining Leaders**
- **Agenda 3: ESG & Climate Resilience**
- **Agenda 1: Value Addition & Market Linkages**

9. Sustainability Strategy

The Academy is designed for long-term continuity through:

- School-based coordination and ownership
- Integration into WiM-Africa national chapter programming
- Linkages to the **WiM-Africa Institute for Leadership, Sustainable Mining & Value Addition**
- Development of mentorship, internship, and partnership pipelines

10. Conclusion

The **WiM-Africa NextGen Mining & Leadership Academy** represents a strategic continental intervention to prepare Africa's youth for meaningful participation in the mineral sector.

By engaging students early, the program transforms young people from passive observers into informed, responsible, and leadership-driven participants—capable of shaping a more inclusive, sustainable, and value-driven future for Africa's extractive industries.